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Exploration and Discovery.

SCIENTIFIC EGYPTOLOGY.

For scientific work in Egyptian, two distinct foundations are now indispensable: (1) The complete mastery of Coptic; (2) a good knowledge of Hebrew, Arabic and Assyrian.

At present Professor Erman, of Berlin, occupies a unique position in the department of Egyptology. Investigators before his time were satisfied with loose translations, loose rendering of meanings, and general inexactness. They recognized to a very slight extent the principles of grammar, and were entirely ignorant of syntax. In most cases they possessed but a smattering of Coptic. No distinction was made between the oldest and latest language. When Erman began, his first work was to distinguish periods of development in the Egyptian language. With a keenness which was very marked he began with the Coptic, which was, of course, the last phase of the dying language. He then took up the language of the "New Empire" (18th to 20th dynasties), and studied every line of its immense literature on the basis of which he wrote his *Neuägyptische Grammatik*, the first scientific grammar of the tongue containing a definite syntax, a thing undreamed of by earlier Egyptologists.

Going back still further, he took up the language of the "Middle Empire" (11th to 13th dynasties), and wrote a grammar on that period. On this foundation he now proceeded to the most difficult task of all; *i. e.*, the language of the "Old Empire" (4th to 6th dynasties). The grammar of this period has just been completed, and will appear within a few weeks. This great work has consumed fifteen years, during which he has also written the most complete Archæology that has yet been written, a marvel of correct detail. Erman seems to be to-day the only man in Europe who can translate an inscription with absolute grammatical exactness. Older men look askance at his results, and cling to their old, inexact methods. Erman's learning is very great, and there is still much to be hoped from him. By his efforts Egyptology has really become a science, and may now be studied from a philological point of view.

J. H. B.